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Village News

Issue 125/November 2020



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P9 & P24**

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Editorial

As I write this on the eve of another lockdown, I feel for those neighbours, friends and local businesses who are going to struggle for the next few weeks. It's not going to be easy, but hopefully it will be worth it to keep COVID 19 at bay in our village and allow us all to enjoy at least something like a normal festive season. I know that the Downley community spirit will be coming to the fore once again, with individuals and local shops and businesses helping the lonely and vulnerable, and it is a positive we can take from the current situation that so many people are willing to help those less fortunate than themselves. Let's all hope that the beginning of December will herald an end to this new lockdown, and the start of our Christmas and New Year celebrations. I wish each and every one of you a peaceful and joyous time as we look forward to a brighter 2021.



N.B Some articles were written before the November lockdown was announced, so be aware that any opening times mentioned might not apply this month.

The copy deadline for the next issue of Downley Village News is 31 January, and we are hoping that many more clubs and societies will be able to post positive articles by then. Please submit updates via the usual email address editor@downley.org and we look forward to hearing from you.

Anne, Editor • editor@downley.org



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Downley Covid-19 Action Group

The Street Reps of Downley have been the recipients of a couple of big thank yous recently. Firstly, a letter of thanks from Steve Baker MP congratulating all the Street Reps for the work they have done for their community, and for any still to come in the second wave. Secondly, they were collectively awarded a “Highly Commended” in the Proud of Bucks Awards in the Collaboration category which “recognises the outstanding work carried out within Buckinghamshire by voluntary, community and social enterprises who have expanded their work to help communities during lockdown”.



However, it is important that we should not be resting on our laurels, as cases and associated hospitalisations are rising once again. The number of cases in the Downley-Disraeli area has risen from less than 2 per week to 11 at the end of October and now the Government has announced an England-wide lockdown that will bring additional restrictions. So your Street Rep will still be available if you need help.

The DCAG is therefore maintaining the services it has organised so far in the expectation that demand will increase again. See the back page of this issue for details.

There has also been considerable publicity over the provision of children’s meals during the holidays and a number of local groups in the Wycombe area are providing ad hoc support. Bucks Council is already putting significant resources into this and those in need of assistance should contact the “Helping Hands” organisation on 01296 395000.

On a lighter note, Christmas is on the way (hot cross buns are already in the shops!) and several groups are trying to organise some events to compensate for the lack of more normal activities. Look out for information from Street Reps about local activities and see the article from the Downley Day committee in this issue about what they are doing. Don’t forget, the need for social distancing still stands.

Have a Merry Christmas everyone and here’s wishing you a better New Year than this year has been.

Downley Covid Action Group



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Downley Common News



Following the refurbishment of the flail we have been able to resume our bracken and ramble-bashing activities in various locations around the common, although the bracken seems to be particularly robust this year and has grown back with remarkable speed requiring another flailing in several places. A private rubbish

dump emerged from the bracken near the old dairy in August which was promptly cleared away and made tidy.

The Common suffered an incursion by joy-riders in September resulting in tyre-marks and ruts all over, including the cricket pitch, and a number of broken posts where the culprits made entrance and exit points.

We were able to replace the posts and beef up the defences with logs. Sadly the lockdown and school closures tended to result in more bad behaviour than normal but now the kids are back at school and the weather is less clement things should get back to normal.



Path clearing was the focus in October when a badly overgrown path opposite Golf Links Cottages was cut back and some overhanging branches removed to allow passage to both people and tractor.

Lastly, a quick reminder to those who don't pay by standing order that your annual subscription was due in October so your timely attention to this matter will result in continued harmony.

Bill Thompson. DCPS

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Downley Community Centre surprisingly busy



The Centre is functioning well under strict Covid-19 rules with business close to normal, but the management committee and trustees would like to reiterate the rules that apply to all visitors until Government regulations change:

- ✓ Please scan the QR code on the front porch
- ✓ Please arrive and depart punctually
- ✓ Please use the sanitiser provided on arrival and exit
- ✓ Please wear a face covering at all times
- ✓ Please ensure only one occupant at a time in the toilets
- ✓ Keep the hall well ventilated – even when the heating is on
- ✓ Maintain social distancing at all times
- ✓ Please clean all surfaces such as handles, sinks, chairs and tables when leaving



In place of the Father Christmas grotto this December, the management committee has agreed that the Centre will donate £100 towards the children's ward of Wycombe Hospital. This is in line with the Centre's philosophy to support local charities when possible.

LIBRARY – major refurbishment is almost finished (see cover photo) so please watch out for the formal re-opening date.

The Centre has two new daytime hirers both based around music with each hirer complementing the other.

Hartbeeps offers classes for babies and toddlers featuring music, puppets, laughter and fun whilst Musical Mayhem is an award-winning live music experience giving babies and toddlers a lively introduction to traditional, modern and original children's songs.

Downley Community Centre - Management Committee

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During those very tough times in March & April when supermarket home delivery slots were scarcer than hens' teeth, our local Downley shops went above and beyond to provide that extra support that so many of us needed. We are so very well served in our local community, but it is essential that we continue to support those local businesses in the better times as well as the times of shortage.

The hours that our wonderful local shop staff put in were above & beyond. Fiona and her Pharmacy team, Sam and the Starlight team and Sarah and the Co-op team were all truly fantastic, as indeed were so many other Downley shops and businesses. Thank you one and all!

I particularly want to highlight the tremendous support that Sarah, Jo, Luke and all the Co-op Team have provided in enabling the Downley Covid19 Action Group to deliver food to our more vulnerable residents, or indeed those who simply had no safe way to shop. Working with the Co-op, our DCAG volunteer delivery team have now made over 600 deliveries, and the service will continue through what may be another difficult period over winter. Sarah and her team could not have been more helpful, caring, thoughtful or efficient. Despite often being run off their feet they remain cheerful, good-natured and always willing to assist our Downley community in any way they can. Thank you from the whole DCAG!

So, PLEASE, remember to support your local shops and businesses - they stood by us during the tough times but need our support every week.

*Mike Dean
Downley Covid19 Action Group - Logistics*

Downley Theatre Group

That old saying "no news is good news" doesn't seem relevant to live theatre at the present; we're unlikely to be organizing outings for quite some time. Members of the Theatre Group have been contacted explaining that their personal details will be held on the secure database and we will update them when more information becomes available. Meanwhile, please get in touch with any questions and we'll remain optimistic that we'll catch a show when safe to do so.

*Alan & Claire Baker
downleytheatregroup@gmail.com
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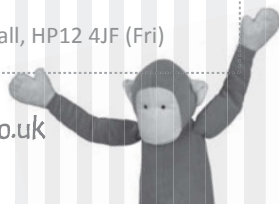
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Downley Descants News

One Night Only



We endured the 'virus' during the spring and early summer and honestly thought things were improving. We were encouraged to go out and mix with people in restaurants; schools and universities returned and things seemed to be getting back to normal. We began to think there might even have been a chance that our Christmas concerts could have gone ahead. Then, what happened? the virus came back with a vengeance and we are now drifting back to the situation we were in last March. Christmas concerts now look impossible and we must look towards 2021 and hope things really do get back to some form of normality then.

We have been unable to meet since March so there is very little to report apart from the loss of two members of the choir. Keith Pulford (bass) and Roy Taylor (tenor) were key members of their respective voice groups and will be sadly missed by all. They have both stepped up to the podium to conduct us or to accompany us when the need arose. There is to be a memorial concert for Keith at his church in Amersham as and when circumstances permit. Downley Descants and many other choirs from South Bucks will take part as Keith was heavily involved in the 'choral' scene in the area. We are honoured to be involved, although very sad about the reason for holding the concert. The Downley Descants committee have also agreed that a charity concert in memory of Roy would be appropriate and this will

definitely take place when we are able. When we have arranged a date it will be well publicised and promoted as we want a big audience to honour Roy and would like to raise a large amount for charity.

On a lighter note, we did manage to hold a socially distanced picnic on the Common in early September which was well attended and enjoyed by everyone. It was unanimously agreed how nice it was to see fellow choristers again, have a chat, and share the camaraderie we all enjoy at rehearsals, albeit for 'One Night Only'. It was actually held in the afternoon, but it was a good excuse to include a song title somewhere in the article. We did have a quiz evening 'pencilled in' for September but this was cancelled for obvious reasons. We will hold a quiz sometime in the future - but the main question and your starter for ten is WHEN.

Bob Cook (Bass)

Downley Parish Notice Boards

Notices for the Parish notice boards should be left at the Community Centre. Notices must be received one month in advance of the event. Notice boards are updated on the first Thursday of each month. Please post notices into the letterbox at the Community Centre clearly marked for the Clerks attention. Please notify the Clerk if you have posted a notice at the centre by emailing to info@downleyparishcouncil.org

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Chameleon Singles Group



It has been an interesting year for Chameleon and like many groups we had hoped by now to return to more “normal” events in our programme. Now, of course, what is “normal” as we enter a second lockdown which means the group’s members can no longer meet. The rule of six had served us well allowing us to meet for walks, drinks, coffee mornings and meals out but that will no longer be possible for a while. It is likely to be the New Year before we can look at doing some of our regular events and perhaps enjoy some days out too.

The internet, and in particular Zoom Video Conferencing, has been a great way of keeping in touch. During lockdown we will be running these sessions on a regular basis which will be themed around the real event. For example, we will have a virtual coffee morning from the comfort of your own home. Similarly, our Lunch Club and Pub Nights will run in the same way. Walks and outdoor events such as days out may be a little bit trickier but we will see what we can come up with!

Of our recent events we had an early evening sunset walk around Penn Wood starting out from The Squirrel at Penn Street. We did a loop following the outer area of the wood for most of the way coming out by the church for the final walk along the road back to the pub. A drink and light meal was enjoyed before returning home.

The Coffee Mornings and Pub events have been well supported although we have had to limit these to a maximum of six people. This has meant it’s not possible for everyone to attend the popular events but this has been necessary to ensure safety and compliance with government guidelines regarding Coronavirus.

We are still welcoming new members to our group. So, if you are single, 40-60’s, looking for a great social life and new friends then why not give us a try? There are no strangers at Chameleon, just new friends to be made both through our Zoom meet-ups and at regular events when these are possible. We have several local people from Downley, West Wycombe, Sands, Cressex and surrounding areas and you would be very welcome too.

To find out more call our membership secretaries Terrie on 01494 445816, Trevor on 01494 529067 or e-mail: info@chameleonsingles.org.uk. Visit us on-line at www.chameleonsingles.org.uk for more information and our current programme or connect with us through Facebook.



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News from St James



As 2020 draws to a close, what a different year it has been. One in which, despite the difficulties and challenges, we have seen people pull together in all sorts of ways to support their neighbours and others in our community.

We have also learned a new appreciation of the things that we do have and the value of the simple things, like the chance to meet up and chat with one another.

In the autumn we held a socially distanced working party day, clearing and tidying up our church grounds and planting some new bulbs. It was such a joy to be working outside with others from the church community, even at a distance.



Community and relationships are so important. We are continuing to hold our services both in the building on Thursdays at 10am, and Sundays at 11am and also to 'Zoom' our Sunday service, with people able to contribute in person or via Zoom, which has been working well. We are also open for our coffee pop-in

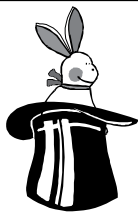


on Thursdays 10.30-12 each week in our church hall, with the appropriate distancing, do come and join us.

As we draw near to Christmas, relationships with family and friends are at the forefront of our minds. It is the time of year, more than any other, when we remember those relationships, sending cards and presents and meeting up together. As I am writing this, we have no idea what restrictions will be in place at that point, but we know for sure that this will be a very different Christmas from usual.

In the midst of the differences I think its helpful to remember the things that do not change.

- Christmas is still a time of celebrating Jesus coming into the world as a baby, sent by God to live on earth and to die for us, making a way for us to have a relationship with God for all time.



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- The love that is at the heart of Christmas will still be there, that will not change – we may have to find different ways of expressing that love, but people have been incredibly inventive in this time, and perhaps having to work harder at this will make it special in different ways

In the coming months we will be praying particularly for strength, courage and peace for all in our community in this time of uncertainty, stress and sorrow for many.



The Churches in Downley are joining together to organise an online Christingle service on Christmas Eve. You will be able to collect packs to join in with making your own Christingle from The Pastures Church, Sunnybank Methodist in Moor Lane and St James from 14 December. Please check their websites for more details about this service.

At St James all our Christmas services will be on Zoom as well as in the building. Please do join us if you can. You will find the Zoom link on our website, www.stjamesdownley.org.uk.

Sunday 20 December	Carol Service	11.00 am
Christmas Eve	Communion Service	11.00 pm
Christmas Day	Communion Service	11.00 am

Rev Heather Graham

Heather.graham@stjamesdownley.org.uk • 01494 534 315 or 07876 292 288

Downley War Memorial Hall



There is still no news on when the Local History section of High Wycombe Library will be open to the public. Consequently, I will not be reporting on the Second World War in this edition.

As I write this there is talk of a second national lockdown so it is difficult to know when I will next have access to the Bucks Free Press archive.

The Hall is currently open for some of the regular hirers but, as you will already know, we have had to cancel our annual Remembrance Service.

Alan Baker

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Downley Methodist Church (Sunnybank)

We're open again!

Although our meetings are still a bit different from what they were pre lockdown, we're now seeing local preachers or our minister, Rev. Vida Foday, most weeks. Face masks are required and we're still not being allowed to sing.

Thanks to technical help from other members in the Circuit, we are now able to include some YouTube clips in our services which are proving to be a welcome addition to our worship.

Unfortunately, we have had to cancel some events this year and our usual Winter Fair in November will not now take place.

Our monthly Craft Club is currently suspended. We miss our young people but they are always in our thoughts and we try to keep in touch.

The playgroup is now back, as well as the dance classes and we're looking forward to welcoming other users again as soon as restrictions allow.

Sunday worship now starts at 10.00am and lasts approximately an hour.

There will be no service at Sunnybank on 27th December.

On Christmas Day we plan to hold a short service at the usual time of 10.00am but, due to restrictions on the number of people we can accommodate, if you would like to come along, you'll need to book places in advance. Masks will be required and I'm afraid that, unless the rules change significantly, we won't be allowed to sing.

The booking line (07811 707918) will be open from Monday 23 November until Friday 12 December. Depending on the level of demand, we may put on a second service at 11.00am.

Sadly, if you arrive at the chapel on the day without a booking we may be unable to accommodate you; something we never thought we would have to contemplate.

We hope that you'll understand and be able to join us.

An extra Christmas event at Sunnybank Chapel

Whilst we're not able to hold a Carol Service in the usual way, we will be having an hour of carols played by candlelight at the chapel from 6pm on Wednesday 23 December.

Please come along and bring the family. As with our normal services, due to Covid restrictions we can only allow a finite number of people into the church building. This means that if the numbers get too high inside we may have to ask folk to move on, or listen from outside.

Unfortunately, again due to Covid, singing cannot take place at this event.

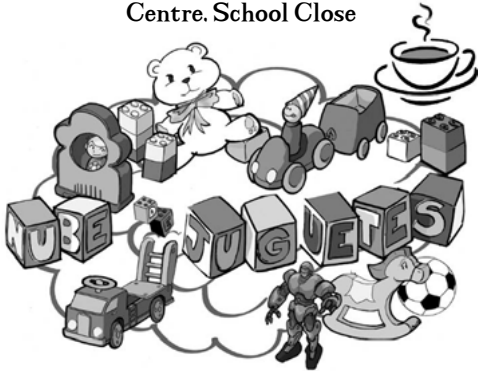
Clive Knapman • Sunnybank Steward

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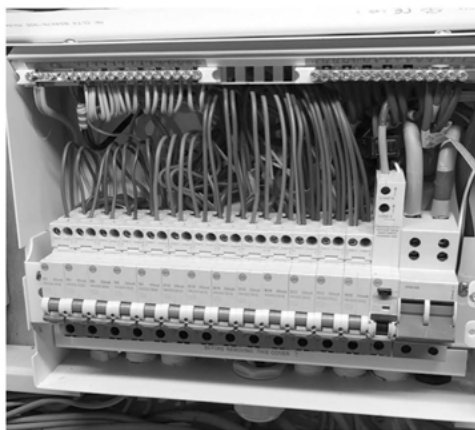
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Coffee Stop News



Sadly, I have to give you news of the passing of Don Pryde recently after a long illness. For many years Don organised our finances and also helped with putting up and taking down the tables. Cynthia was, of course, one of our valued helpers and we send her our love and condolences.

Unfortunately, we don't see any prospect of opening again in the near future but rest assured we have the contact details of all of our regular customers and will let you know the moment the situation improves. Meanwhile, we are all keeping in touch by phone, email, and grapevine.

Stay safe everyone;

Ann Buxton
pabuxton@hotmail.com

Downley Gardening Society

We are still keeping in touch with our members via an email newsletter with chat and pictures about our own gardens and helpful tips. We managed to have a socially distanced afternoon tea outside St James' hall in September before the rule of 6 came into force. The sun shone and we had a lovely time, with some beautiful plants for sale too.



As we are still not able to meet in the hall, we are going to try some Zoom meetings. We have 2 booked for November and December; members will receive details of how to join by email or via our newsletter. If you are a non-member and would like to join please contact Alison on downleyveales67@gmail.com. We will be asking for donations rather than membership subscriptions this year.

Please keep safe, enjoy your gardens and we hope to see members and non-members, who are always very welcome, at one of our events.

Support your local voluntary Library



Downley Community Centre
School Close,
Downley,
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire HP13 5TR
Tel: 01494 528133

Library Opening Times

Mondays 10-12 noon
Thursdays 3-5 pm
Saturdays 10-12 noon

Email: enquiries@downleylibrary.org.uk



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You can link to us through
'Groups'. See what's new on
the library shelves!

Library Update

Now for the good news, the library is allowed to re-open once the current lockdown has ended. We have been given access to a completely refurbished library, now we have to refill the the bookcases, sort out the computers and counter and then assemble the protective screens. The next challenge will be to work out how many people we can have in the library at a time. Please keep a lookout on the Parish notice boards and library Facebook page for actual opening date. We will also put notices in local shops.

Please be advised that you will have to use facemasks in all parts of the community centre.

Woodlands Pre School

If you are a long-term resident of Downley, you may already know about The Woodland Pre-school which operates out of the Guide and Scout Hut on Coates Lane. We have been open for over 40 years now and must have started a thousand children on their 'learning journey'; maybe your own children were some of the "Woodlanders" that passed through our doors, played with toys and played outside in the wooded playground.

We are so lucky to be in such a wonderful location, with lots of trees to watch the changing seasons and many different types of wildlife that visit our Nature Garden. The site has changed a lot over the years. A long time ago a team of hardworking volunteers and parents transformed the outside area from a large patch of brambles and overgrown plants to an exciting and engaging play area. There was a play tower in the centre of the area, which included a rope climbing wall, a slide and a fireman's pole to slide down. In other parts there was space to play and run about with a soft bark surface, in keeping with the natural environment. If your children attended Woodlands over the last 15 years they would certainly have enjoyed playing and learning using the outside area.

In the last few years, the play tower has started to look worn and tired. This is understandable when you work out that possibly 450 children have climbed, slid, jumped and enjoyed playing on it for several hours a day! The fundraising committee at the time decided it needed replacing and worked really hard organising events such as Christmas Fayres, quizzes, sponsored bounces and raffles. Subsequent committees continued with this hard work and finally, after a delay due to COVID, in May this year the play tower was replaced. It is similar to what was there previously, but it is slightly bigger to accommodate more children (and even the odd adult!). Unfortunately, again due to COVID, not all of last year's children got to see the new play tower; however the children this year are certainly enjoying it, as am I!

Myself, the staff and 'Woodlanders' are so grateful to the committees, parents and local community over the last 3 or 4 years, who have generously given time or money to enable us to replace this vital part of our outdoor learning area. Hopefully, hundreds more children will enjoy the new play tower for many years to come.



Katy White • 'Woodlands' Leader

We currently have some spaces available for the spring and summer terms and are now able to offer viewings once the children have left for the day. If you would like to book an appointment or just want to find out a bit more about Woodlands then please contact us on 01494 521953 or admin@thewoodlandpreschool.co.uk



DOWNLEY

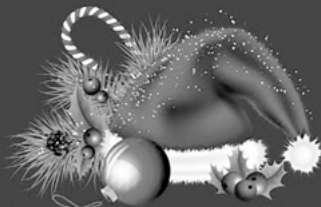
Christmas

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Downley Community Centre, HP13 5TR



Community Events at Christmas

Continued restrictions imposed under Covid regulations mean that a somewhat less merry Christmas may be on the cards this year and this could be particularly trying for those who are elderly, live alone or are socially isolating. The Downley Day Committee will therefore be putting on some community events to support those already being planned by a number of street groups. These will include:

Saturday 5th December at 2:00pm: The Downley Christmas Tree will be put up outside the Co-op food store. Following on from the success of the Friendship Tree on the Common, we would like to invite Downley's children (Government restrictions permitting) to come and help decorate the tree with your own decorations that you can bring along. We suggest that parents accompany their children to ensure that social distancing rules are maintained.

Sunday 13th Dec: Christmas Craft Market at the Community Centre starting at 1:00pm until 5:00pm. All three rooms will be utilised, each containing up to 4 stalls, meaning 12 stalls in total. There will be range of craft stalls on display with opportunities to buy either those last minute gifts (if you're well-organised) or the bulk of your Christmas shopping (if you're not). Volunteers will be present to ensure that visitors form an orderly queue to enter and conform to a one-way route through the centre with separate entrance and exit so as to maintain adequate separation. Fingers crossed that we don't go into tier 2 before then.

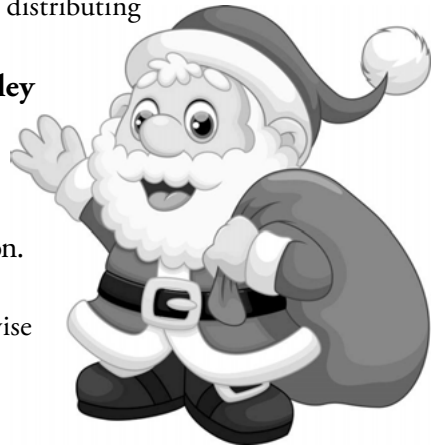
Saturday 19th December: A number of streets will be putting on their own Christmas activities on the Saturday before Christmas and these will be supported by some village-wide entertainment provided by the Downley Day Committee in the form of the "Downley Blowers" Brass Band and the Top Notes choir who will perform a selection of seasonal favourites at a number of locations around the village during the afternoon and early evening. They will be supplemented by a visit by Mother Christmas and a number of self-identifying elves who will be distributing good tidings where it matters most.

Keep a look out on downley.org and Downley Facebook page for timings and locations.

These activities are dependent on Government restrictions not exceeding the equivalent of Tier 1. Any more restrictive rules will result in cancellation.

Anyone who would like to get involved with supervising these events, such as helping to supervise social distancing rules, will be most welcome – contact info@downley.org.

Here's wishing you all a Merry Christmas.



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CONTACT YOUR LOCAL WI OR FEDERATION (COUNTY OFFICE) TO FIND OUT MORE!

Your local WI is Downley Evening

WI website/social media page <https://downleyeveningwi.weebly.com/>

WI contact information Janet Durkin 01494 535662

Your local Federation is Buckinghamshire

Federation contact information 01494 526685 HQ@bucksfwi.org.uk

If you have any questions or are interested in **setting up your own WI**, contact the National Federation of Women's Institutes at **membership@nfwl.org.uk**
020 7371 9300

**This is half the usual price as new members usually join in October - December for £10.75.
This offer is for three extra months for free. Subscriptions can be renewed in April 2021 at £44 for the year.
No subscriptions are automatically renewed.*



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facebook.com/thewi

www.thewi.org.uk/trythewi

Downley Evening WI

Hello again from Downley Evening WI.



Autumn is upon us and winter and Christmas looming. Normally, at Downley Evening WI, we have a full programme of events and celebrations planned but, of course, nothing is normal this year. We have not been able to meet in person except in small gatherings, like everyone else, but we are adapting to the circumstances. We held our AGM via Zoom and it worked well. It was great to see friendly faces and hear a bit of news.

Speaking of news ... our sister WI, Downley Village Evening, has now closed and merged with us at Downley Evening, much to our delight. We are so happy to welcome new members from the village and hope they will find us a warm and friendly family. We look forward to great times ahead. At our AGM, Janet Durkin was re-elected as President of the new, enlarged WI and we congratulate her on steering us into this new era for Downley Evening. Janet is every inch a WI woman who pours herself tirelessly into working for the membership. She has certainly been a mainstay during the past months of lockdown restrictions, welcoming small groups to her garden in the good weather, phoning and chatting with members to make sure they are ok and keeping them connected and cheerful. Thank you, Janet, for all you do.

As for Zoom ... well, we are about to embrace the virtual world in our meetings now. November's meeting will feature Tom Way speaking about Wildlife on your Doorstep (Nov 10th) and December will be Celebration of Christmas with Andy Thomas (Dec 8th). We are aware that not all of our members will be able to avail themselves of these virtual meetings but we hope that something is better than nothing for those who can, and in this way we hope to brighten the darker months with some interest, fun and friendship. Usually, we would have other activities too, such as a Christmas concert with the Downley Descants and a mulled wine evening at a member's home but, sadly, these events cannot happen this year. It's the tree that bends with the wind that weathers the storm, so we need to be adaptable.

This year is the centenary of Bucks Federation of WIs and it should have been full of events and activities celebrating that milestone. All cancelled. However, there is still one element of the celebrations available. The WI commissioned and has published a book: The Bucks Villages Book, and all the contributors are WI members. Not a book about the WI, but about the villages (and towns or communities) in Buckinghamshire where the WI has put down roots. It aims to provide a snapshot of these communities - a little bit of history, maybe some local anecdotes or colour, mostly what the village is like today. It's illustrated too so you might see someone you know. At £12, it's good value and might make a lovely Christmas present, particularly for friends or family who have moved away, or just for yourself.

See opposite for details of a special trial WI membership. We hope that this may make a difference to some of you who are perhaps feeling isolated in more ways than one. As

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someone living alone, I know that I have been very grateful this year for the technology which has enabled me to be in contact with family and friends, to engage in fun or learning activities or simply to have a chat face to face via my computer. It will never replace a hug -but it has helped me not to feel so solitary. So consider 'Try the WI'. It might be just what you need.

If you would like information about how to grab your copy of the Bucks Villages Book, or would like to join us for one of the virtual meetings, please contact our President, Janet Durkin, on 01494 535662. Although we won't be able to offer you our customary cake, you will be very welcome. All that remains to me now is to wish you safety, good health and a very blessed and happy Christmas and New Year. See you in 2021.

Angela Taplin

Downley Parish Council Meetings

Meetings are on 2nd Tuesday of the month • *Up to 30 minutes are allowed for public questions*

War Memorial Hall 7.45pm • January, March, May, July, September and November

Downley Community Centre, School Close 7.45pm February, April, June, August, October and December

Agendas are posted on the Parish Council notice boards at least 4 days in advance. Copies of the Parish Council's Minutes are available at the Downley Community Library for residents to read. They are also included on the Parish Council Website.

The Clerk (Chettina Masters) can be contacted on 01494 444683
E: info@downleyparishcouncil.org



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phone: 01494 530558
www.bridgewebs.com/downley



Littleworth Road Advent Calendar of Activities!!

Well it's nearly that time of year folks and, as they say, it's all in the planning so we had to start early! Early October that is!!

We can all agree that 2020 has been a pretty rough year for everyone. So we, the Street reps for Littleworth Road, decided we were going to try and do something a little different this December to cheer everyone up (hopefully) and focus our minds on Christmas fun...

Rayne Hillcoat-Williams set this off with her Christmas Jumper idea, which she later shared with all the village Street reps. Jenny Douglas came up with a Christmas Advent theme, so we went with it and put our heads together (metaphorically speaking – distancing was observed at all times...) to come up with an activity or event, some small, some not so small, one for each of the 24 days run up to Christmas Day.. not an easy task but someone had to do it. Ho! Ho! Ho!

After more than one cup of coffee and several retakes, we finally had a plan of action! Now, to try and set the ball rolling.

My first step was to speak to Karen at Woodlands Playgroup, who was very enthusiastic about being involved and agreed to organise the children to create a Nativity Scene for us to put on display. After approaching Timothy Cooper at South Bucks Business Products at Cressex Business Park, he very kindly agreed to support us by sponsoring and providing the 3ft by 2ft card needed for the figures. We are very grateful to Timothy and his brother Matthew for their support.

Next, following Jenny D's impromptu conversation with Mark Darvill of Hillclimb Garage, Littleworth Road, whilst shopping next door, he said that he would be happy to be involved.....so off I went to speak with Mark to discuss what he would be



happy to do for us. He was most welcoming and said that he was born in the area and would be proud and delighted for Hillclimb to support the road's Christmas Advent Calendar of Events as he hoped to become an active member of the village community. After asking me about our plans, Mark very kindly offered to sponsor our Community Christmas Tree, which Mark will place on the forecourt of Hillclimb Garage on 1 December, decked with lights and a large star. The top will be decorated with donated baubles, leaving the bottom half for one of our road's later activities.

Mark was also eager for us to use the garage forecourt for the Littleworth Road Christmas Market (with mulled wine provided by Downley News), as well as welcoming the Woodlands Nativity Scene to be placed in the showroom window on 4 December. The Tree and the Nativity Scene are very much our focal point for the Christmas period for carols and parade activities ending there.

We have many things planned including: Readings, Competitions, Quiz sheet, Children's Nativity Parades, Santa Parade, Christmas Carols along the Road, Neighbours Tree Decorating Day (with refreshments courtesy of Hill Climb Garage), Gifting Day, Christmas Jumper Day, etc.

Have a great Christmas xx

*From Shirley Ellis, Jenny Douglas
& Rayne Hillcoat-Williams*

These activities are dependent on Government restrictions not exceeding the equivalent of Tier 1. Any more restrictive rules will result in cancellation.

Merry
Christmas

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All the News from Hillclimb Garage

You may have noticed some changes here at Hillclimb Garage – we have begun our transition across to being a dedicated Service and MOT Centre, with the popular used car department closing to allow room for expansion. We have been doubling in size each year over the last 5 years and we had always intended to make this jump at some point – this year being a most remarkable time to do it!

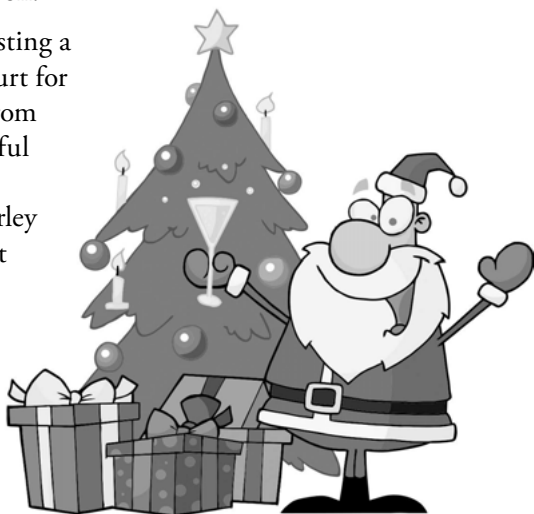
The Covid situation has been important for us to cope with here – we all need our cars, and although we might be using them less, it's even more important that we can rely on them when we need them. Our Covid-Safe service now includes an internal application of Steri-7 sanitiser which delivers virus and bacterial protection for up to 5 days once used on a surface – we also sanitise keys when you come to collect your car. We have a 'clean' collection and delivery service for those who would prefer to stay shielded and this has been an amazing support for the most vulnerable in our community. We have been offering a post-lockdown check for cars – and we offered a 'start your car' day – where we attended 19 cars in the local area that had failed batteries!

With this most recent lockdown, we are extremely well prepared to remain open with full PPE and Covid-Safe procedures in place. MOTS will still be due during this time, and many cars will still need an MOT from May. We have a tremendously successful collection and delivery service, and every car is sanitised with Steri-7 which provides 5 day protection on surfaces. We are still here for you

You may have heard we were in the finals of two national competitions – we have heard this week that our nominations are to be carried over into 2021. We are extremely proud to have been shortlisted down to the final few garages in both competitions – we will keep you informed as to how we get on!

Finally, we are incredibly proud to be hosting a sponsored Christmas Tree on our forecourt for local residents – which will be in place from 1 December. We are planning a wonderful Christmas Market on 6 December in conjunction with our local street rep Shirley Ellis – held outdoors, on our forecourt. It is the first time we have done anything like this and we sincerely hope that it is enjoyable for all of our local neighbours!

Watch out on our website and Facebook page for updates on events and other community news.





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The Downley School PA Christmas is still going ahead.....

Whilst we are living in such a strange time when we are unsure of how we will be able to celebrate Christmas, The Downley School Parents Association are determined that we

will spread a little festive cheer around the Village. Sadly, our Summer Fayre didn't go ahead and neither will our Christmas Fayre so we have put our heads together and come up with some great plans!

Introducing.....

The Downley School PA Great Elf Hunt 2020

Robertsons Estate Agents have sponsored our Fayres for many years and have kindly offered to help organise this event. For £2 per family, you can download clues to help find the elves hidden around the village. This will be a great family activity whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines, also getting some fresh air and exercise. Anyone who downloads the clues will be automatically entered into a prize draw. The Great Elf Hunt will be open to everyone in the village, even if you don't have a child at The Downley School.



Tickets for the Great Elf Hunt will be on sale from 1 December 2020.

**If you have a child at the school, you can pay for your map
at <https://www.pta-events.co.uk/downley>**

We would love as many as possible to get involved, so if you don't have a child at the school, don't worry. Please email us at thedownleyschoolpa@hotmail.co.uk and we can sign you up that way. You can also purchase a map from Sam at Starlight Stores.

We really appreciate your support and hope this will be a fun activity for all the Village.

Raffle: We are also running our popular Christmas Raffle, if you would like to support us and buy some tickets please contact us at thedownleyschoolpa@hotmail.co.uk. We have some fantastic prizes including an Ipad Air 2020 256Gb Wi-Fi, a Christmas Hamper and a Children's Hamper. We will also have other themed hampers for prizes.

Also, if you are able to donate a raffle prize this would be hugely appreciated and you can contact us at the above email address.

Thank you for your support. We know it's a little early, but we would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas - and stay safe!

The Downley School Parents Association

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improvement, especially
when my voice is not
behaving as it should!

Patrick

”

Emma's teaching style is
confident, engaging and
openly honest, and has
enabled me to gain
renewed joy and
confidence in my singing.

Jill

Top Notes



J. Heartycough's Horticultural Hints

Winter 2020

Wal, hello all my ole mates. Yes, I'm still here, that virus hasn't penetrated my defences – I reckon it'd 'ave a job what with awl that stuff I puts on the gardin and sprays on the roses - if it keeps orf the blackspot and mildew then it'll keep orf that virus - plus the bonny smoke and muckspreading smells comin from them farms over Napple way. "I can tell where you've bin" sez Mrs H when I gets back from the plot!

So wot 'ave I bin a' doin and goin to do this winter eh? Wal, first a little discussion about keepin the weeds down. Wal, once I've dug over a bed and forked in some muck I rolls some ol' carpet over the top. That stays there until I needs the ground andno weeds underneath! Some plot organisers don't allow carpet – wal, I dunno! They sez it's not natural or summat – pollutin' the ground. Wot! Then they sez to put sheets of plastic down to stop the weeds a 'growin'. Wot again! Carpet is recyclin', or even upcyclin', plastic is not. We've got too much of it everywhere, so it don't make sense to bin carpet but OK to use plastic?

So, let's 'ave some sense can we! Fortoonately carpet is OK at the Downley plots (but I would like a little hut too and that's not OK) ...my spuds and onions are excellent and they comes from carpet beds. I'm even thinking of settin' up a second-hand carpet sale – could be a nice little earner they tells me.

Wal, wot 'ave I got goin' for next year? First I've planted some broad beans in seed boxes to bring 'em along before plantin' out. My favourite – Aquadulce – had sold out so I'm hexperimentin' with some 'Valenciana'. Excitin' eh? ("That's all he gets excited about nowadays", says Mrs H...looking winsom'.) Then it's plantin' that foreign garlic – the young uns likes that. The instructions sez they do best on well drained, light soil with lots of sun.....wot? In Downley!! They likes potassium; I don't know why but they do. That's bonny ash to the likes of you and me,

so get some from your bonny site or from your fire or stove at home (but don't go usin' coal dust), spread it round the cloves – them little garlics you get when you breaks up the whole bulb. You gets maybe 6 or 8 to a bulb. Dib in the clove at least an inch (in old money) or more below soil level (for you young 'uns that's 2.5 cms in they new fangles fancy foreign measurements).



Then I got sum lettuces comin' on in growbags in the greenhouse, where the tommytoes was – they were fabulous this year – even Mrs H was impressed! I finds that most lettuce varieties germinates in seed boxes in the greenhouse orl year round – don't overwater 'em and keep some fresh air a'circulatin'. Mrs H has just cooked sum chutney with the green tommytoes wot didn't ripen before the rain set in.all stored away to eat during another lockdown.... or when they Brexit lorries can't get through.

So wot about my French cousin, Jean D'Artichoke? 'Eh bien, quel virus?' he sez back in the summer, when he could get onto his terroir.....but now he's banned from getting' there, so he's not a happy petit lapin at the moment! Ha ha!

So, that's orl my wise contribution to you gardeners for this time, so stay by the fire, 'ave a snooze after readin' up some some seed catalogs and 'ave a little taste of summat to warm you up.....

They daffadowndilly bulbs 'll be popping up in yor gardin before long - a sign that another year'll be starting. Cousin Jean tells me that sum French bloke's advice when times are tough is to 'cultivate yor gardin', so that's my advice too.

Cheerio and a bientot

J.H. sent from my iSpade.

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Downley Local History Group

Corpse Paths, Graveyards and Downley

Have you ever wondered why there is no graveyard in Downley even though the first village church was built in 1874?

Over the centuries burials were conducted on hallowed ground that was generally associated with the local parish church. With the ever increasing population, people began to move away from their original village, and began to farm and populate land some distance from the parish church. Eventually their growth in numbers led to demands for a local church to serve the new community. However revenue from burials, together with that from the rites of birth and marriage, was then an important source of income to a parish church and the construction of a new church ran the risk of encroaching upon the territory of the existing parish church and, of greater concern, the loss of revenue to the clergy. The parish church would therefore insist that only a 'mother' church could hold burials, often necessitating the transportation of the deceased some distance, along what became known as corpse or coffin paths, to their final resting place.

What is now the village of Downley was originally divided between two ecclesiastical parishes with the major part of the village in the parish of West Wycombe, whilst the hamlet of Littleworth lay in the parish of Hughenden. As the village grew St James' Church was built at the junction of Narrow Lane and Commons side to serve the village - but with the exception of burials.

The bodies of those persons from Littleworth, in the parish of Hughenden, would be taken down through the valley from Common Wood, past the Manor House, then onto the graveyard at Hughenden Church, or via Coates Lane and Hughenden Road. The corpse of a poor person would be taken by horse and cart, probably borrowed from the local farmer, or carried manually by friends.

The last resting place for the Downley people in the parish of West Wycombe was in the graveyard of Saint Lawrence Church- 'The Church on the Hill'. Their final journey in the old days was made by horse and cart by way of either the Blacksmiths Lane route (opposite the cricket pitch), or Kiln Pond Lane (opposite The High Street) - the paths meeting at the site of the steps (see over). Both routes then followed the path down to The Pedestal at the junction of the Bradenham Road, through to West Wycombe village, and then the long climb around the hill and up to the cemetery. When a person was



*St James' Church at the junction of
Narrow Lane and Commons side*



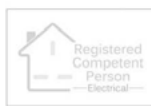
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unable to afford a cart, the route was the same for the people carrying the coffin, but then they would turn right along the Bradenham Road to Flint Hall Farm where a public footpath runs to about halfway up the hill.

As yet we have not researched when weddings and christenings first took place at St James' church, either at its original location on Narrow Lane or more recently at the summit of Plomer Hill. Perhaps you can help out with a date and the occasion?

If you would like to learn more about Downley's past then have a look at our website at <http://downleyhistory.uk> and contact us if you have something to add or comment on. In the meantime, Stay Safe.



The junction of the Blacksmiths Lane (LHS) and Kiln Pond Lane (RHS) steep-sided, corpse routes.

Downley Cricket Club

“It's going to be a long winter”, so goes out the rallying cry from Colin Caesar, forty years a Downley cricketer, trying to motivate the team as every season draws to an end. This year saw a shortened season like no other, and those who felt comfortable to turn out for the Club played as if every game was rare and precious.

The Firsts, playing in the Championship Division of the combined BCMB League, beat some stronger opponents, while the Seconds had a creditable mid-table finish. Several friendlies were arranged and these too were hard-fought, with victory against High Wycombe CC especially memorable. As Downley closed in on victory a couple of huge sixes hit out of the London Road ground, remain an abiding memory. Plenty of (socially distanced) cheering from family and friends during every match will sustain the players through the winter. That aspect of Downley cricket will, we hope, never end. Who can forget the pitch invasion by enthusiastic supporters when the Seconds won the knock-out Cup a few seasons ago!

England's men and women cricketers playing live cricket on our screens, including a few games on the BBC after what seemed like decades, brought joy to millions of cricket-lovers. Five overseas teams operated in Covid-secure bubbles, with England unearthing a few new stars. Downley too saw a few players step up. A great effort was made to respect government guidelines so that players could play in safety.

In truth it has been a frustrating year, especially for the dedicated folk who got the ground on the Common looking the best it has in years, with plenty of good weather in April, May and June to lovingly tend it. The wicket has been tidied and “put to bed” for the winter. All of us look forward to next season with optimism.



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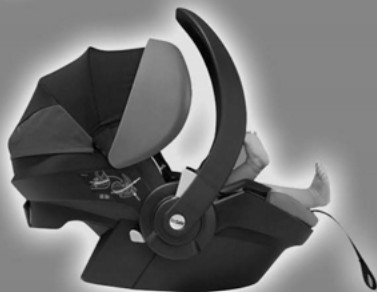
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Where there's a will

Family history is a never-ending detective story. Answers lead to questions, and the search goes on. There is always more to find, and one of the most satisfying lines of enquiry, after names and dates have been established, is to root the people into the landscape, the places we know.

Wills can be a good source of detailed information, not only confirming relationships, but also sometimes containing far more personal detail than censuses or certificates.

The will of Samuel Joynson, my 6x Great Grandfather who is buried in his family vault in West Wycombe churchyard, was proved on 27 June 1821 and mentions land, buildings, farms, cottages, gardens, orchards and meadows in Walters Ash, West Wycombe, Bradenham, Naphill Common, Mooseley (Moseley Farm in Naphill), Tything Brook (Church Lane in West Wycombe village), and specifically mentions the Guard House at the bottom of Church Hill in West Wycombe. It also mentions by name many of the tenants of the properties and in some instances who he had originally purchased the properties from. Samuel wasn't leaving anything to chance; in the years before the land registry he wanted to ensure that his executors knew exactly who was to get what and the extent of his estate.

Earlier, in 1790, Sarah Fenner (my 6x Great Grandmother, and an in-law to the above Samuel), after she takes up the first page of her will ensuring her place in Heaven and confirming that she is truly sorry for her worldly sins, mentions land bequeathed to her by her late husband James Fenner, including Myze Farm (still stands, in the shadow of West Wycombe Hill on the A40) and Cockshoots Farm off the Chorley Road.

To walk in the footsteps of past generations; to stand in the same places which haven't changed significantly since ancestors stood in the same spot over 200 years ago; to walk through the same doors and walk the same paths are things which make family history come alive. The sense of belonging to a place, to the people, to the community is something I talked about in part 1 of this series, and now looking at wills I come back to it again. In the intervening parts I have written about wars, workhouses, death, murder, happy times and sad, successes and achievements, and discovery.

In these unprecedented, worrying times it is reassuring to know that we are just a small part of history. Life will go on, it will change but it will go on and we will play our part in shaping the world for generations to come, who one day, might be writing about us!

Paul Turner



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From Westminster

Steve Baker - MP for Wycombe

Normally when I write in the November issue of Downley Village News I am thinking about the things we share at this time of year – the change in the seasons, Remembrance Sunday, preparations for Christmas and so on. This year is different, and there is no doubt of the impact coronavirus has had on all our lives.



Although I am writing this before the vote is held in Parliament, I expect us to go into a four-week lockdown during November. The Prime Minister is anxious to contain the autumn surge of people testing positive for COVID, protect the NHS and save lives and livelihoods. The restrictions also have to be balanced against the long-term effect on business and jobs, and physical and mental health.

Although we are not going back to the full-scale lockdown of March and April, and schools will remain open, the Government is asking the clinically vulnerable and those over 60 to minimise their contact with others. People are only permitted to leave home for specific reasons, and I am afraid non-essential shops, leisure and entertainment venues and the personal care sector have had to be closed. It is important to remember the NHS continues to be available for non-COVID healthcare so people should not be afraid to use the NHS for scans and treatment if they need it.

The Government will continue to do everything possible to support jobs and livelihoods. Almost 10 million jobs have been protected with furlough, and this scheme is being extended throughout November. The Chancellor has paid £13.7 billion to help the self-employed, and for November the support will be doubled from 40 to 80 per cent of trading profits.

Although the new restrictions will mean there will be changes in my parliamentary office, I still remain available to speak to constituents. Many of us have had to learn to embrace technology, talking to our friends and family on the 'phone and on the internet rather than meeting in person. Zoom, Microsoft Teams and the traditional telephone have meant I have been able to continue to speak to constituents, sometimes singly and sometimes in groups. It has actually allowed me to offer more meetings and greater flexibility to constituents, especially those who might otherwise find it difficult to come to my office due to work, health, childcare or other reasons.

If you would like to get in touch with me please email: steve.baker.mp@parliament.uk. If you despair of bureaucracy and would like my help with a particular issue, please 'phone my constituency office on 01494 448408.

It only remains for me to send season's greetings and to wish everyone a happy, prosperous and, perhaps more importantly than ever, a healthy New Year.

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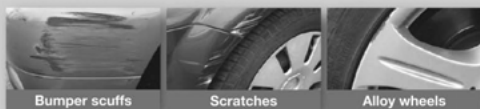
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News from Buckinghamshire Council

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At the time of writing, the cases of infection in Buckinghamshire are increasing and Buckinghamshire Council, in partnership with Buckinghamshire Public Health and the Buckinghamshire NHS, have launched a campaign to further raise awareness and ask for co-operation and support.

Buckinghamshire Council is determined that no child goes hungry during school holidays. The 'Helping Hand' programme was launched in October to ensure those who need extra support receive it. The 'Helping Hand' team can be reached on 01296 395000, or alternatively anyone can speak with a member of staff at one of the council access points at their offices in High Wycombe, Aylesbury and Amersham. The programme is being funded by joint support from the Government's Hardship Fund provided to local councils over the summer and Buckinghamshire Council.

High Wycombe High Street (currently benefitting from a programme of repair), the Brunel Shed building preservation and the Wheatsheaf Inn project (dating from 1399 and thought to be the oldest building in High Wycombe except for the Parish Church) are just three of the legacies of renewal and investment from Wycombe District Council. More locally, Downley High Street and Commonsides are due for repair and renewal in the next financial year. Plans are currently being drawn up for further capital works to the carriageways and footpaths in the area. Repairs requiring immediate attention can be reported on 'fix my street' on the Council's website.

The new boathouse, café and public toilets on the Rye are nearing completion, ready for use from early next year. A welcome addition to the green flag award winning park. Hughenden Park has also retained its green flag status, marking it out as one of the best maintained parks in the country.

Keep safe and protect Bucks.

*Paul Turner, Buckinghamshire Councillor for Downley
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The Downley Communications Forum set up as part of the Community Plan, provides oversight to the Village News, the Village enews and the downley.org website.

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Every street in Downley has a wonderful Street Representative that will assist in the first instance. Please check www.downley.org for contact details of the Street Representative for your road, or simply call the DCAG on 07526 782977.

If you are having to self-isolate and have no one else to shop for you, and you cannot access the various major supermarket home deliveries, please call our wonderful local Co-op on (01494) 526179. They will pick and pack your order and take payment over the phone, and then one of our DCAG volunteers will safely deliver the shopping to you.

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